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Statement submitted by Women's Board Educational Cooperation Society, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

Implementing the post-2015 Development Agenda: Moving from commitments to results

For there to be accurate planning and implementation of any development agenda there is a need to collate accurate data on which all strategy must be based. In Africa this is a huge task since data, not just any form of it, but accurate data is nearly impossible to collate. There is need to develop realistic means to get accurate statistics regarding birth, marriage, disease, disability, death etc.

The population density of each region and state should be taken into account for effective planning in areas of transportation, housing, job creation, power distribution and generation, water and schooling at all levels. Many times our leaders fail due to improper planning since there are no reliable statistics for them to fall back on when making projections and writing a developmental proposal.

Demography has always existed in history. Ancient rulers and even philosopher have pondered the relationship between development and population but here in Nigeria, at this present age we continue to grope without accurate demographic figures as a blueprint to match development.

The Chairman of the National Population Commission, Mr. Festus Odimegwu affirmed in August 2013 that Nigeria has never had a credible census. According to him, "No census has been credible in Nigeria since 1863. Even the one conducted in 2006 is not credible. I have the records and evidence produced by scholars and professors of repute. This is not my report. If the current laws are not amended, the planned 2016 census will not succeed."

As if this was a prophecy the census that was scheduled for this year has been cancelled. The current administration has been denied a vital tool that would have been immensely helpful in the effort to carry out its plans to lead our nation to greatness.

The current state of our nation may actually be traced to this sad fact — that we do not have a reliable demography on which our blue print for development is based. There are many challenges that require accurate statistics to tackle. Unfortunately this problem will continue to haunt us; since in Nigeria population demography is a sensitive issue. Many times it ends in controversy and there are many political and ethnic problems related to demography and population distribution.

The commitment shown on the part of government was initially commendable considering the substantial sum that was budgeted for carrying out the census. Hope weaned again when it became obvious that the logistics were not properly put in place for the actual census to be carried out.

For us to move in the right direction in terms of development, every constructive and positive development blue print must include the number of people we are planning for, their categories, the hierarchy of problems they may have, etc. That is one clear demonstration that it is a result orientated development agenda and not just a mere show of it. We need results!